



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Announces that California is First in the Nation to Comply with Help America Vote Act Requirement

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Announces Agreement with U.S. Department of Justice to Implement Statewide Voter Registration Database

Sacramento, CA --- Today Secretary Bruce McPherson announced that his office has reached an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, ensuring the State's compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) with the creation of a Statewide Voter Registration Database. The creation of the database will mean that California will have a complete and accurate voter list, ensuring access for all eligible voters and helping to prevent voter fraud in future elections.

"This agreement is a model for other states as they continue to develop and operate their own statewide voter registration lists," said Bradley J. Schlozman, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "HAVA's voter registration list requirements are among its most important, and we applaud the new leadership in the California Secretary of State's office for working cooperatively with us to reach this positive and timely result."

"I appreciate the cooperation we have received from the U.S. Department of Justice," said McPherson. "I am confident that the creation of the Statewide Voter Registration Database will go a long way to ensure the integrity of our voting process and to ensure that all eligible voters will be able to cast a ballot in California."

The voter information gathered for the statewide list will be compared with records from the Department of Motor Vehicles, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the California Department of Health Services, allowing for the comparison with felon and death records, to create the most accurate and current list of registered voters possible. Once complete, the database will allow elections officials to be certain of each voter's eligibility to cast a ballot.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was passed in 2002 and signed by President Bush. Section 303 of the law requires that the State's chief elections official implement a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list. HAVA requires the list be defined, maintained and administered at the State level, to contain name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the State and to assign a unique identifier to each legally registered voter in the State. The database will serve as the official list of all registered voters in the State of California.

"I am pleased that our extensive efforts with the U.S. Department of Justice, on behalf of California have paid-off and that the State of California will now be in compliance with these HAVA requirements," said McPherson.

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